

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, February 22, 2006, 5:30 p.m.
Administrative Complex Board Meeting Room

The February meeting of the Santa Rosa County Parks and Recreation Committee was held at the Administrative Complex beginning at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 22, 2006. The following members were present representing the sports associations and host organizations: Larry Dixon, Navarre Youth Sports Association, Navarre Sports Complex/Navarre Football-Soccer Park/Holley Ball Field; Mark Lashare, East Milton Recreational Park; Tim Mulroy, Tiger Point Recreational Park; Robert Breeland and Robert Saville, Futbol Club of Santa Rosa, Inc., Santa Rosa Soccer Park; and Randy Ward, Pace Athletic and Recreation Association, Pace Athletic and Recreational Park/Santa Rosa SportsPlex.

Absent were representatives from Chumuckla Community Center and Park, Fidelis Community Center and Park, Benny Russell Park, and Swenson Park.

Also present were the Administrative Services/Parks Operations Manager, Tammy Simmons, County Administrator, Hunter Walker, and Joe Tyler with Allstar Productions.

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

The Administrative Services Manager welcomed all.

Minutes from the January 25, 2006 meeting were passed out and will be approved at the next meeting.

The first item of discussion was a request from Tiger Point Park for a waiver from the background check for the Bayside Soccer group. Simmons had sent the request out to all members of the committee. Darrin Nicely with the Navarre Youth Sports Association responded by e-mail with the question, "Is the check done by FDLE a nationwide check or Florida only?" Breeland stated that he believes FYSA does do a national background check; however, FYSA determines volunteers on Florida background check only; however, the national results are submitted to the organization for their determination. Simmons stated she would further research this item and correspond with the committee by e-mail. Walker questioned what decision was made on the request for the background waiver, Simmons stated the policy states FYSA background checks had to meet or exceed the current policy to receive a waiver and she would check to see if it meets or exceeds and correspond with the committee.

Lashare brought up his wish to issue badges to each volunteer in the Santa Rosa County Park system. After much discussion the Committee felt it would not be advantageous and would be difficult when it came to traveling teams. Simmons stated that the difficulty with the traveling teams was brought up at the last meeting and the discussion was that the answer may be to hire a deputy for these types of events. This item will be discussed at a later date.

The next item of discussion was on the draft park rental fee schedule. Simmons stated that she has provided a draft fee schedule prepared by Charles Baxley. (below)

This policy outlines the process for the rental of park facilities to organizations for the purpose of fund raising activities. Organizations wishing to rent park facilities will be classified in one of two categories: In-Park Organizations and Out-Park Organizations.

In-Park Organizations shall be defined as teams whose majority membership (50% or greater) consists of kids who participate in the park's recreation league during that particular year.

Out-Park Organizations shall be defined as teams whose majority membership (50% or greater) consists of kids that do not participate in that particular park's recreation league program that particular year or organizations that have no affiliation with the particular park.

Park rental fees shall be standard for all parks owned by Santa Rosa County and shall be based on the following:

In-Park Organization
Out-Park Organization

Weekend Usage

Weekend Usage

Daily Usage
Friday, Saturday, & Sunday
Daily Usage
Friday, Saturday, & Sunday

Per Field
\$60 + \$10 County Fee
\$175 + \$25 County Fee
\$85 + \$10 County Fee
\$250 + \$25 County Fee

Concession Stand
\$25 + \$10 County Fee
\$75 + \$25 County Fee
\$50 + \$10 County Fee
\$150 + \$25 County Fee

Gymnasium

Organizations contracted by Santa Rosa County to manage the individual park facilities shall not be charged in conjunction with the running of recreational programs, or conducting tournaments that benefit the cost of running the recreational programs.

Other non-profit organization such as the American Red Cross, Cancer Society, etc. may be exempt from rental charges upon the written approval of Santa Rosa County and the appropriate Park's managing organization.

A \$500 deposit will be required for each event scheduled at a park facility. Park facilities shall be returned to as good or better condition than the facility was prior to the event. Upon satisfactory inspection and acceptance of the condition of the facility following the event, the deposit will either be returned or applied to the renter's remaining balance due. Remaining balances shall be paid in full within seven days following the event. All rental fees will be paid to the individual park organization who in turn will reimburse Santa Rosa County their appropriate fees.

Simmons included in the committee's packet e-mail correspondence concerning the fee schedule from Albert Ward, "My opinion is this. The county benefits a great deal in the amount of revenue brought in by a worthwhile tournament. Therefore I think it should be categorized as "In County" or "Out of County" based organizations/businesses. I think in county organizations/businesses should not be discouraged to use county facilities when all involved could benefit from outside revenue. These fees seem to be much higher than most places. Also, the more tournaments held in Santa Rosa Co. keeps local teams and local money from leaving the area. When you are talking about concessions. Does that mean usage of the existing concession building? Or does that include someone setting up their own concession. (i.e...trailer, tent)"; from Robert Saville, "I sure hope these fees are not set in stone. We at FCSR are trying to build up an Academy program, to get some of our kids back from Pensacola and surrounding leagues. If we are forced to pay this high of a field rental, we also will have to look at other venues to play, which is defeating the whole purpose of our Academy program. I think we need to see about adjusting the wording, to allow our kids to use the fields at a lower price, or even free. Just as we are trying to build up our park, this could actually kill our program. I hope this fee schedule is still open for debate."; from Tom Dorsey, "Smaller - 140' fence fields (T-ball & Coach Pitch - 7/8 year olds), wondering if you would consider a possible lower fee. Those fields charge less usually per team - Suggest \$100/field +\$15 --- (cost of lights is usually less too) or whatever you think. Larger 200' fences + up - keep cost as you suggested"; and response from Charles Baxley to Tom Dorsey, "It doesn't matter to me. I think it would be easier to keep the prices the same. Even though the entry fees are less for the younger ages that's where you make the most money on gate fees and concessions. More people come out to see the little ones. Remember it's not just the lights that the county is concerned about. There's water, sewer, field mowing, etc."

Simmons discussed Ray Palmer's concerns that he felt that the fee schedule should be based on the park amenities. He feels if the fee schedule is adopted the same for all parks that host organizations will not utilize parks that are not equal to a new and larger park.

The next item of discussion was on the formation of a tournament/fee schedule.

Breeland stated the issues he would like to see addressed on the fee schedule is a fee for field preparation, fee schedule should be different from park to park and sport to sport, and he would like the fee to be based on per game instead of per day.

Discussion took place on the rental of concession stand, it was determined that currently the concessions are being handled several different ways: management organization runs concession, not an option for the host to run concession; tournament host brings in their own concession stand and no fee is charged to host; management organization runs concession and a percentage of the gross receipts is paid to the host; host organization runs concession or allows someone of their choice (local high school teams) to run concession and a percentage is paid to the management organization; etc.

Tyler stated that some counties have a menu fee schedule where the host can choose how they want the tournament to be structured. He would like to see all the options available to become a part of the fee schedule. Tyler further stated that if the fees are too high the host organizations will go to other areas to host tournaments. Tyler further stated that economic impact studies should be done on all tournaments and provided to the county to show the dollars these tournaments bring into the county.

Simmons stated this has been brought up several times since the initiation of this committee and as of this date no statistics have been submitted for an economic impact study. At the February 2006 meeting Mr. Ray Palmer, Pensacola Sports Association, brought the subject up and explained to the members exactly what is needed from the management organizations to perform an economic impact study, he stated that he would put together a report for the Commissioners on a quarterly basis, if this was the wish of this committee.

Tyler stated that his organization would be more than happy to provide this information to Mr. Palmer.

Walker stated the only difference in the economic benefit is that Santa Rosa County has a small number of hotels available to the out-of-town guest; however, they are spending the little money in the local restaurants. Walker encouraged that the information needed to do the economic impact studies be provided to PSA in order to have this information available to the Commissioners and the citizens of the county. Walker further stated that the citizens of the county should not be subsidizing the cost for these tournaments.

Committee agreed that the fee schedule should not be the same for every park, that it should be according to what each park has to offer and that each park should be allowed to set their own fees for the usage of their fields. Dixon stated that the fee to the county should also be different from park to park and sport to sport.

Walker stated that the parks were set up for recreation purposes and not for money making.

Breeland stated that if no tournaments took place then the fees for the local children to participate in recreational sports would be so high, that a lot of children would not be able to play.

Walker stated that we need to strike a good balance between recreational activities and tournaments and make sure the system is not being abused.

Simmons stated that we need to address the county with reports and assurance that the parks are operating under the original intent the county built and funded these parks.

Walker stated that all the county is attempting to do is to cover the utility cost from tournaments that are held in these parks for out-of-county teams.

Simmons passed out reports to each of the organizations with the utility cost for the parks for the last year (February 2005-January 2006), she further explained that this is the cost for utilities only; this report does not include the cost of equipment or personnel used in these parks. Simmons further stated that these figures are low because of Hurricanes Ivan and Dennis, causing the parks to be shut down.

Discussion took place on how to collect the fees that will go the county. The Committee recommended that the management organization collect the fees and turn them over to the county. Discussion also took place on making the host organization fill

out the paper work for the economic impact study and committee suggested to make it a condition to get your deposit back.

Simmons stated Walker's comment concerning the fees was on target with the goal of the county. Walker stated at a previous meeting, "If the park charges someone to use the fields, it would seem that this would be where the fee comes into play".

Simmons stated the biggest issue to address is the economic impact studies and reports to the County Commissioner's. Simmons requested a calendar for tournaments that have been scheduled so that she can follow up with each group after a tournament to make sure the information is submitted to the county.

The items to be discussed at the next meeting will be the draft tournament/fee schedule and quarterly reports to the Commissioners on revenue generated through tourist tax dollars, which is scheduled for Wednesday, March 22, 2006, at 5:30 p.m., at the Santa Rosa County Administrative Complex Board meeting room.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.